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LETTER DATED 23 JANUARY 1991 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Upon instructions from my Government, and in light of grave and dangerous situation which has erupted in the Persian Gulf region as a consequence of Iraqi invasion and continued occupation of Kuwait and the ensuing forcible measures taken since 16 January 1991, I have the honour to bring the following to your attention.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, as Your Excellency is well aware, condemned Iraqi aggression against Kuwait, and called for immediate, unconditional and complete withdrawal of Iraqi forces to pre-invasion positions. My Government has also taken all necessary measures to comply, in line with its obligations under the United Nations Charter, with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, in particular its resolutions 661 and 670. Your Excellency has already been informed of the measures taken by the Islamic Republic of Iran in this respect through letters contained in documents S/AC.25/1990/38 and S/22020.

Since the declaration of our rejection of Iraqi occupation of Kuwait early after the invasion, my Government endeavoured to bring this crisis to a peaceful end through realization of unconditional and complete withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait. This policy was pursued both in our bilateral contacts with Iraqi leadership and in our endeavours at regional, Islamic and international levels. Only days before 15 January 1991, during the visit of the Vice-Chairman of Iraq's Revolutionary Command Council, the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran emphasized the unavoidable necessity of Iraq's full compliance with Security Council resolutions in order to avert a catastrophic war. We also proposed the convening of an emergency extraordinary Summit of the Organization of Islamic Conference in an attempt to find a peaceful termination of the crisis in line with relevant Security Council resolutions. We regret that the collective efforts of the international community, including those of my country, to prevent the currently unfolding catastrophe failed.

The human loss and destruction inflicted upon the Muslim people of the region and their resources, the dangerous prospects for prolongation and spread of the conflict, and the evidence of violations of international humanitarian law and

norms governing the conduct of armed hostilities are alarming. Under these grave circumstances, it is imperative that the Security Council - which was actively seized of this crisis prior to 15 January 1991 - assess the present situation in light of its resolutions and take a more active role in achieving, without further loss and destruction, the complete withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait, termination of the present armed conflict and withdrawal of foreign forces from the region.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, for its part, is prepared to co-operate fully with Your Excellency and the Security Council in order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives as well as the long-term stability and security in the volatile and strategic Persian Gulf region which can only be realized through a regional security and co-operation mechanism within a United Nations framework and without intervention and presence of foreign forces - which has historically been misguided and destabilizing.

Furthermore, in line with its principles and requirements of its national security, the Islamic Republic of Iran considers it imperative to refrain from engagement in the present armed conflict. Needless to say, the Islamic Republic of Iran reserves the right to take all necessary measures, in exercise of its legitimate and inalienable right of self-defense recognized in Article 51 of the Charter, against any violation of its sovereignty or territorial integrity.

It would be highly appreciated if this letter were circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kamal KHARRAZI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative